

Attendance Policy

Barford Primary School



Responsibility: Headteacher

Date: September 2023

Review date: September 2024

Contents

1. Aims	3
2. Legislation and guidance	3
3. Roles and responsibilities.....	3
4. Recording attendance	5
5. Authorised and unauthorised absence.....	8
6. Strategies for promoting attendance	9
7. Attendance monitoring	9
8. Monitoring arrangements	12
9. Links with other policies	12
Appendix : attendance codes	13

1. Aims

We are committed to meeting our obligation with regards to school attendance through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Promoting good attendance
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Building strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school
- We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [working together to improve school attendance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of [The Education Act 1996](#)
- Part 3 of [The Education Act 2002](#)
- Part 7 of [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments\)](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)
- It also refers to:
- [School census guidance](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
- [Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools](#)

Partnership Working

Barford will work with Birmingham City Council and support agencies as appropriate to ensure regular attendance at school.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

3.1 The Governing Body

The governing board is responsible for:

- Promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data

- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school
- Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance
- Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

3.2 The Headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

3.3 The Designated Senior Leader responsible for Attendance

The designated senior leader is responsible for:

- Leading attendance across the school
- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having an oversight of data analysis
- Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data
- Building relationships with parents/carers to discuss and tackle attendance issues
- Creating intervention reintegration plans in partnership with pupils and their parents/carers
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Mrs. E. Harrison and can be contacted via the school office.

3.4 The Attendance Officer

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

- Monitoring and analysing attendance data
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance and the headteacher
- Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Advising the Attendance Lead (authorised by the headteacher) when to issue fixed-penalty notices

The attendance officer is Miss J Shute-Blake and can be contacted via the school office or by telephone on 0121 464 3765.

3.5 Class teachers

Class Teachers are responsible for:

- Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office using BROMCOM.
- Ensuring attendance has a high profile within the class.
- Taking registers electronically at the beginning of the morning and afternoon sessions.
- Build on a culture of challenge when addressing persistent illness absences with parents.
- Discuss with parents attendance/punctuality concerns on a weekly basis.
- To discuss attendance concerns with parents.
- To see pupil's attendance as the responsibility of all staff.
- To participate in training regarding school systems and procedures in relation to attendance.

3.6 School office staff

School office staff will:

- Take calls from parents/carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system (BROMCOM).
- Transfer details of calls from parents/carers to the Pastoral Lead in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance

3.7 Parents/carers

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 9.00 am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence), and advise when they are expected to return
- Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day

3.8 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day on time
- Follow the schools attendance initiatives

4. Recording attendance

4.1 Attendance register

We will keep an attendance register, and place all pupils onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of the activity if a pupil is attending an approved educational activity
- The nature of circumstances where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils must arrive in school by:

Class	Gates open and children in for register	Start of Lessons	End of day
Nursery	8.45 Gates open 8.55 Register	9am	3pm
Rec	8.30 Gates open 8.40 Register	8.45am	3.10pm
Year 1,2	8.30 Gates open 8.40 Register	8.45am	3.10pm
Years 3,4,5,6,	8.30 Gates open 8.40 Register	8.45am	3.20pm

The register for the second session will be taken after the end of lunch and will be kept open for 5 minutes.

4.2 Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 8.40am or as soon as practically possible by calling the school office.

The attendance will send a text message to parents, notifying them that their child is not in school.

We will mark absence due to physical or mental illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

Where the absence is longer than 5 days or there are doubts about the authenticity of the illness, the school will ask for medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers will be notified of this in advance.

4.3 Planned absence

We encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised (coded as M) as long as the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment.

The pupil's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence (minimum notice of 28 days notice).

4.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code
- After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code

The schools' Pastoral Lead is located on the main school gate so that:

- They are the first line of contact with parents to ascertain reasons for late arrival.
- They are able to monitor families who are late on more than one occasion and may be in need of support.
- They can help parents understand the importance of being in school on time and the impact that even a few minutes late can have on their child's education.
- They can offer immediate support / signpost support for parents in order to improve attendance.
- Targeted intervention starts at the earliest opportunity.

4.5 Following up unexplained absence

Where any pupil we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

- Call the pupil's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school may carry out a home visit.

- Identify whether the absence is approved or not.
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session.
- Call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary.

4.6 Reporting to parents/carers

The school will regularly inform parents/carers about their child's attendance and absence levels through:

- regular class teacher conversations
- conversation's with the attendance Officer and Pastoral Lead
- during termly parents' evenings,

5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

5.1 Approval for term-time absence

The headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to a pupil during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for. The school follows Birmingham City Council Guidance.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least 28 days before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, available from the school office. The headteacher will require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** may include:

- Illness (including mental illness) and medical/dental appointments
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents/carers belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents'/carers' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision

5.2 Legal sanctions

The local authority can fine parents/carers for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

Penalty Notices:

The school may seek to use Penalty Notices in the following cases:

- Following a school meeting where parents have been warned in writing of the school's intention to use a penalty notice.
- Where an application for leave of absence has been refused and the pupil is subsequently absent during the requested dates.
- Where an application for leave of absence has not been submitted but the pupil is absent and the school is satisfied, following investigation that the pupil is on an unauthorised holiday.
- Pupils failing to return after an authorised leave of absence.

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

Fast-Track to Attendance is the legal process we use to tackle ongoing unauthorised absence.

The leave in term time (legal) process is for cases of unauthorised leave in term time of continuous five days or 10 sessions.

Birmingham City Council Penalty Notice Information can be found [here](#).

Lateness

The school has clearly defined systems for identifying pupils whose punctuality is a cause for concern and for implementing work with those pupils. Below is listed our set procedures to tackle punctuality:

- The Pastoral Lead is situated on the main entrance each morning so that she is able to offer front line support and positive challenge to parents who do not get their children to school on time. Strategies such as breakfast club places may be made available for a set period of time (free of charge to PP children) to help improve attendance
- Class teachers will tackle lateness on a weekly basis.
- The Attendance Officer will identify a small group of children who are consistently late and work with the Pastoral Lead to improve offer breakfast club to encourage punctuality.

If children are consistently late initially a letter will be sent to parents by the Attendance Officer, and parents will be invited into school for a meeting with the Pastoral Lead to discuss this further.

6. Strategies for Promoting Attendance

The school works hard to promote high levels of attendance for all. Barford uses the SOL Attendance Diamond to be clear about the schools expectations with parents (see appendix) . We celebrate good levels of attendance and celebrate children who increase their attendance levels in weekly rises. We recognise these improvements in classrooms, assemblies, newsletters and parents' evenings.

Strategies to Improve Attendance

1.	Register Time – positive experience for children.	Daily by 8.50am	Class teachers offer a positive first experience of each school day by extending a warm good welcome This may include warm affirmations such as, ‘ it’s really lovely to have you back in school today, we missed you”
2.	Sharing of Weekly Sol Tracker with children in class.	Monday morning (Registration Time)	Class teachers filter the weekly tracker and share praise and reward for all children rises in attendance or maintaining high levels. Teacher will put children on the interactive attendance display in each classroom.
3.	Attendance Rewards	Monday morning	Class teachers will allocate rewards based on the weekly successive rises on the tracker as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 rise = child gets given a sticker. • 2 rises = 1 raffle ticket per child added to the pot and two children are drawn from the pot for an attendance cupboard prize. • 3 rises / green arrow = 2 raffle tickets per child added to the pot and two are drawn for an attendance cupboard prize. Attendance Monitors will manage the prize cupboard and reward time.
4.	Celebration Assemblies		Standards leads will lead celebration assemblies which will include the sharing each classes attendance percentage and number of raffle tickets earned this week. Each class will bring their attendance tub and transfer raffle tickets to the main display boards tub. The attendance office will update the board each Friday.
	Persistent & Severe Absentees / SARM Children		Rewards Cards with Mon – Friday listed in circles for two weeks at a time Children with historical issues around PA (last year and this year) or on SARM visit the AO daily for a stamp in their card. Once they have a complete set of stamps for consistent attendance across the two weeks, they trade it in for a small reward (to be decided).

7. Attendance monitoring

We monitor and analyse all children's' attendance and absence data so that we may identify pupils or cohorts that require support with their attendance.

	Group 1 (Green): No Concern The child attends for 97% - 100% of the time.
	Group 2 (Yellow) : Concern The child attends for 95% - 96.9% of the time.
	Group 3 (Amber): Risk of Underachievement The child attends for 93% - 94.9% of the time.
	Group 4 (Pink): Severe Risk of Underachievement The child attends for 90% - 92.9% of the time.
	Group 5 (Red) : Extreme Risk of Underachievement The child attends for 0% - 89.9% of the time.

7.1 Monitoring attendance

The school will:

- Monitor attendance and absence data half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil level
- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern

The school will compare attendance data to the national average, and share this with the governing board.

7.2 Analysing attendance

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these pupils and their families
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns
- The Inclusion Team, during the accountability meeting will look at:
 - Patterns of absence.
 - Patterns of lateness.
 - Patterns of medical appointments.

- Correct and consistent use of absence codes across the school.
- Trends in reasons for absence will be analysed termly, for example-use of the C code, leave of absence and exclusions.
- Trends in particular groups (SEN, FSM, ethnic groups, gender), years will be identified half termly.
- Attendance data will inform action planning, and will be linked to the school development plan and future revisions of the Whole School Attendance Policy.
- The impact of interventions half termly-via Barford's Attendance Tracker for attendance under 90%.

Frequency and nature of feedback of attendance data to the:

- Governors – termly
- Staff – on-going (weekly attendance tracker sharing)
- Children – ongoing via assemblies and weekly tracker sharing time
- Parents –ongoing via workshops/newsletters

7.3 Using data to improve attendance

The school will:

- Provide regular attendance reports to class teachers and other school leaders, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies

7.4 Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and **severe absence** is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Hold regular meetings with the parents/carers of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum once a year or in light of new government legislation.

At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing body

9. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy

- Behaviour policy
- Home Visits
- DFE – Working together to improve school attendance [DFE link](#)
- DFE - Responsibilities (Attendance) [link](#)

Appendix 1: attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and traveller absence	Pupil from a traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence

U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed
----------	----------------------------	---

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day

Appendix 2

EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES – PUPIL TERM TIME LEAVE REQUEST

(to be completed by parents/carers only)

Pupil's Name D.O.B Class

Pupil's Name D.O.B Class

Pupil's Name D.O.B Class

I / we request permission for the above named pupil(s) to be granted leave during the school term.

Reason for request

Dates of Absence From To

No of school days

Address where we will be staying

.....
.....

Contact number while away

I/We understand that if leave is agreed:

- If travelling abroad, I / we will supply a copy of the return travel documentation.
- I / we will supply the name and phone number of a contact person whilst abroad.
- If I / we do not return at the agreed time; I / we am / are aware that I / we may be issued with a penalty notice. If I do not pay the fine, the case may be referred to Court which could result in a fine for each **per child** and a criminal record.
- In exceptional circumstances penalty notices may not be issued and cases may be taken straight to Court.

Parent/Carer 1

Name

Address

Signature _____

Date _____

Parent/Carer 2

Name

Address

Signature _____

Date _____

Request agreed / denied

Signed Head Teacher Dated

Appendix 3

Attendance Procedures including Safeguarding Home visits		
<i>Day of Absence</i>	<i>Procedure</i>	<i>Staff member</i>
1 & 2	<p>Where a child is not in school an email will be sent to all parents asking them to contact the school immediately. (BROMCOM)</p> <p>Administration staff to make 1st and 2nd day calling</p> <p>All contacts on the pupil's BROMCOM data sheet to be contacted.</p> <p>Those pupils marked as N with no reason given will receive a phone call, followed by a BROMCOM message if the school are unable to make any contact with the parent/carer. All N codes must be re-coded by Friday 4pm on Bromcom.</p> <p><i>Any concerns record a MY CONCERNS by the Pastoral Lead or Attendance Officer</i></p> <p><i>Home visits if there are any concerns or no contact. Record outcome on MY CONCERN.</i></p>	<p>Attendance Officer</p> <p>Attendance officer / Office Staff</p> <p>Pastoral Lead</p>
3 & 4	Continued unauthorised absence Pastoral Lead/AO to make HomeVisits , hand deliver Unauthorised Absence letter if still no response.	Pastoral Lead Attendance Officer
5	<p>If the pupil's whereabouts still remain unknown and a home visit has been conducted, the Attendance Office will complete a CME referral via the LA for further advice.</p> <p>If the pupil has been found and remains absent (holiday) then the AO/HT/DHT will follow the 'Leave in Term-Time' procedures. Class teacher will be informed of the outcome.</p>	Pastoral Lead Attendance Officer

Appendix 4

Less than 90% Attendance Prosecution may be considered at this stage

A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' (PA) when their attendance falls below 90%. All pupils whose attendance have fallen to this level or are at risk of reaching this level will be closely monitored through the School's tracking procedure, and regular contact made with their parents/carers. Parents/carers will be given opportunities to meet and work with school in improving their child/ren's attendance.

There are a number of sanctions that school can take to address the issue of non-attendance. In order to try and identify the reason for absence we will always talk to you first to identify the reason for absence. Penalty Notices (Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003) Penalty Notices will be considered when:

- A pupil is absent from school for the purpose of a Leave of Absence in term time and the absence has not been authorised by the school.
- A pupil has accumulated at least ten sessions of unauthorised absence and further absence has occurred following written warning to improve Penalty Notices will be used in accordance with Birmingham City Council Code of Conduct.

Where intervention through the 'Fast track' process fails to bring about an improvement in attendance the Local Authority will be notified and legal action in the Magistrates Court may be taken. The school will provide the Local Authority with evidence required for a prosecution under section 444/4441 (a) of the Education Act 1996 and will appear as a prosecution witness if required by the court. This is to ensure that parents realise their own responsibilities in ensuring their child/ren's attendance at school.

LEVEL 1

Attendance meeting (EarlyHelp) to be held with parents. Letter sent home by AL, Meeting chaired by AL and any other relevant agency if required for example: FSW. Appropriate targets set with pupil/parent/school.

**THREE HOUSES WILL BE COMPLETED WITH THE PUPIL AT THIS POINT
If no improvement and attendance begins to fall intervention escalates
to Red Level 2**

AL/SLT to continue to monitor

Attendance Officer
Pastoral Lead

Copy of minutes
to be held on file
**Added to My
Concern.**

LEVEL 2

Fast-Track process will then be initiated and parents will be invited into school for a SARM meeting plus any other agencies involved-Early Help.

THREE HOUSES WILL BE COMPLETED WITH THE PUPIL AT THIS POINT

AO/SLT to continue to monitor

**If no improvement and attendance begins to fall intervention escalates
to Red Level 3**

Attendance Officer
Pastoral Lead

Copy of minutes
to be held on file
**Added to My
Concern.**

LEVEL 3

Below 80%- Once SARM has been completed and if there are continuous unauthorised absences, then all paperwork will be submitted to LA Court Team for prosecution.

Attendance Officer
/SLT

Copy of minutes
to be held on file

		Added to My Concern.
SEVERE ATTENDANCE LEVEL		
<u>LEVEL 4</u> Intervention	<p>50% or below</p> <p>As level 3 plus:</p> <p>The pupils will have their attendance checked daily, an attendance contract with the parents and referral to family connect as appropriate.</p> <p>All services will make this group the top priority for support. This may include a whole family plan, consideration for an education, health and care plan, or alternative form of educational provision.</p>	<p>Attendance Officer Pastoral Lead /SLT / outside agencies</p> <p>Copy of minutes to be held on file Added to My Concern.</p>

Flowchart of CME Process

School requested *background checks* & home visit prior to referral

Receive referral from children missing education inbox (cme@birmingham.gcsx.gov.uk)

Check key details on Pupil Database (Impulse)
Care first (Children's Social Care)
Data warehouse (Council services e.g. Council tax)
Triage referral (eg Attendance, Safeguarding risk, or Pupil Missing)

Management Desk appraisal for Allocation or No Further Action

Missing Pupil – case opened & school notification sent
Commence tracing process.....No Further action – school notification sent

Schedule for further home visit if required.....traces to continue

Pupil Located – school notified and records updated

Advise
Professional Partners
e.g. Admissions

Pupil's whereabouts remain unknown.

Missing Case File archived pending missing case review (3 month review cycle)

End of Academic Year – ALL missing pupils' records reviewed using DfE Websites

Deletion Notice sent to school on completion of Tracing Cycle

Three Houses

House of
WORRIES

House of
GOOD THINGS

House of
DREAMS